

LDS Part 3 - Candidate Guidance

Who is this examination for?

The LDS Part 3 Practical Clinical Skills (PCS) examination is the final part of the Licence in Dental Surgery (LDS).

In order to sit the Part 3, you must have already passed the LDS Part 1 and LDS Part 2.

The LDS is an examination that, once passed, allows dentists who qualified outside of the UK and EEA to apply for registration with the GDC, and so practise unsupervised in the UK.

In addition to GDC registration, the LDS qualification shows that you are licensed by the Faculty of Dental Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. This gives you the status associated with the Royal College and its reputation for high standards. Once you are a licentiate of this College, you are also eligible to become an Enrolled Member if you so wish.

What is the structure of the examination?

The LDS Part 3 is a practical clinical skills (PCS) examination that assesses your practical operative skills in a controlled, simulated context, including on a dental manikin.

The examination lasts **180 minutes** and is made up of **three cases**, as follows:

Case	Elements	Weighting	Timing
A	Adult scenario-based restorative procedure on a dental manikin	40%	70 minutes
B	Adult / paediatric scenario-based procedure on a dental manikin	40%	70 minutes
C	Allied dental / medical planning and management	20%	40 minutes

Each of the three case scenarios may include multiple clinical tasks ('exercises') relating to the scenario, all of which are compulsory.

Cases A and B will usually consist of two exercises each.

Case C will usually consist of 4 or 5 exercises.

What can I be expected to be tested on in the LDS Part 3?

The Part 3 PCS examination is designed to assess a combination of clinical skills that would be needed to manage one treatment session for three dental patients. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Practical dental procedures including management of complications that may be of a medical or dental nature. The practical dental procedures may include, but are not limited to: tooth preparation for indirect restorations, provisional restorations, direct restorations, endodontic procedures, minimally invasive techniques, clinical procedures during removable partial denture provision, non-surgical periodontal treatment etc.
- Interpretation of data
- Clinical judgement and decision making
- Communication with laboratories
- Professionalism
- Health and safety, including occupational health
- Manual dexterity

The Part 3 PCS examination is a simulated clinical examination, not a mechanistic test of practical ability. The test requires you to make clinical decisions based on the information provided, then carry out appropriate clinical procedures.

In addition, all rules and regulations applicable to a live patient being treated in a dental surgery apply. Therefore, you must pay attention to health and safety, infection control, working posture, etc. These areas are assessed in addition to the practical exercises that must be completed.

The standard expected is of a just-competent UK dental graduate, who meets the standard required by the GDC's *Preparing for practice* learning outcomes for dentists.

The LDS Blueprint shows which learning outcomes candidates can be assessed on in the Part 3 PCS examination. The examination aims to assess a range of these outcomes, but may not assess every outcome.

What does the Part 3 PCS examination look like on the day?

The examination takes place at the Clinical Skills Laboratory at the QMUL Institute of Dentistry in London. You will be sent full directions and instructions on where to register once your place on the examination has been confirmed.

You will be asked to arrive at the venue approximately one hour before the start of the examination.

You will be sent a candidate briefing ahead of the exam day, and one of the examiners will go through this with all candidates before the examination begins.

The examination takes place in a clinical skills laboratory similar to the one in the photograph below.

You will have up to 20 minutes before the examination begins to familiarise yourself with the equipment and setup of the laboratory.



The examination will take place in a laboratory like this one

The examination lasts a total of 180 minutes. You will be provided with a booklet that provides all the information required to complete the cases. You will have 10 minutes to read the booklet before the examination begins.

You will have 140 minutes to complete Cases A and B, and your work (artefacts) will be marked by expert examiners after the examination has ended. You may use the time allotted for Case A and Case B flexibly i.e., it is up to you how to manage your time between the cases and their exercises.

Case C is observed and marked by an expert examiner as you are carrying out the tasks. It lasts 40 minutes and you will either complete it before or after attempting Cases A and B. You will be told on the morning of the examination whether you will sit Case C before or after Cases A and B.

You will not be able to go back to Cases A/B once the 140 allocated minutes have elapsed; likewise you will not be able to go back to Case C once the 40 allocated minutes have elapsed.

An example of the examination timetable is below:

Time	Candidates 1-15	Candidates 16-30
08:30	Familiarisation with dental manikin station	Familiarisation with dental manikin station
08:50	Read candidate booklet and tasks	Read candidate booklet and tasks
09:00	Cases A and B (140 mins)	Case C (Observed, 40 mins / 4-5 exercises)
09:40		Cases A and B (140 mins)
11:20	Case C (Observed, 40 mins / 4-5 exercises)	
12:00	End of examination	End of examination

What materials will be available for the examination?

All instruments and materials required for the PCS examination will be provided for you. You will not be able to bring your own instruments or materials, and you will not be able to request supplementary instruments in addition to those provided. This is to ensure that all candidates complete the examination using the same equipment and materials.

Instruments provided may include, but are not limited to the following. You should make sure that you are familiar with these.

- A selection of dental instruments
- A restorative kit including slow and fast hand pieces
- A selection of burs appropriate for the task e.g. diamond and steel burs of suitable sizes and shapes both fast and slow
- A selection of endodontic instruments and materials
- Impression materials, e.g. silicones (light, medium, heavy body and putty)
- Impression trays and adhesives
- Temporary crown fabrication materials
- Curing light
- Rubber dam kit
- Waxes
- Writing utensils.

The examination will be completed in examination conditions – that is, candidates are not able to talk or discuss their work with any other candidates.

You will not receive any results or feedback on the day of the examination itself (see below – ‘When will I receive my results notification?’)

How can I prepare for the Part 3 PCS examination?

The part 3 PCS examination aims to be a simulation of clinical practice. You may choose to continue practising clinical dentistry where you hold a valid registration. Some candidates find preparatory courses useful. Candidates have also been known to observe clinical practitioners to learn and adopt contemporary practices within the UK.

You will need to make sure you are familiar with UK clinical guidelines and standards to inform your clinical choices and practices. You will be required to have knowledge of UK regulations and clinical guidelines relevant to safe clinical practice.

What should I wear on the day of the examination?

You should wear **clinical attire**.

You should bring your own safety goggles and magnification devices if required.

PPE (facemasks, gloves and aprons) will be provided and you do not need to bring these with you.

When will I receive my results notification?

Results will be released **approximately four weeks** after the examination.

This is so that we can carry out and quality assure the results determination processes thoroughly.

What feedback will I receive?

As well as an overall pass / fail result, you will receive a breakdown of how you performed in each of the three cases in relation to the passing standard.

The results letter will also show you which learning outcomes were assessed in each case.